

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 ARA-10 IO-13 /104 W
-----117446 230218Z /66

R 221530Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 772
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 3319

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, SO, ET, IT
SUBJ: VISIT OF SOMALI FOREIGN MINISTER TO ITALY

1. SOMALI FOREIGN MINISTER JAMA BARRE STOPPED OVER BRIEFLY
IN ROME FEBRUARY 20. ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER FORLANI
HELD ONE-HOUR MEETING WITH HIM AT AIRPORT. MFA BRIEFED
US AFTERWARDS ON DISCUSSION, WHICH FOLLOWED PREDICTABLE
LINES.

2. ACCORDING TO MFA, JAMA BARRE SEEMED AS INTRANSIGENT
AS EVER ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR SETTLEMENT IN OGADEN.
WHEN FORLANI ASKED HIM ABOUT PRINCIPLES FOR SETTLEMENT
BEING SUGGESTED BY US, JAMA BARRE SAID THAT AMERICAN'S BASIC
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GOAL IS SOMALI WITHDRAWAL FROM OGADEN. THEREFORE THERE
IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AMERICANS AND SOVIETS, AND
SAID BARRE MIGHT AS WELL NOT HAVE KICKED SOVIETS OUT
OF SOMALIA. HE ADDED THAT IF SOMALIA WITHDRAWS FROM
OGADEN, SIAD BARRE WILL EITHER BE REPLACED BY PRO-
SOVIET LEADER OR MOVE BACK TO PRO-SOVIET POSITION
HIMSELF.

3. JAMA BARRE WAS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR ANY PROGRESS TOWARD SETTLEMENT AT TRIPOLI MEETING. HE SAID THAT MENGISTU WAS NOT READY TO NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY AND IS PRISONER OF SOVIET ADVICE. JAMA BARRE ADDED THAT SAUDI ARABIA IS BEING VERY HELPFUL TO SOMALIS BUT IRANIANS ARE NOT COMING THROUGH WITH AID TO EXTENT EXPECTED. FINALLY. JAMA BARRE SAID THAT CURRENT SOMALI ESTIMATE OF FOREIGN PRESENCE IN ETHIOPIA IS 12,000 SOVIETS AND 25,000 CUBANS.

3. MFA REGARDS JAMA BARRE AS "NOT RELIABLE REPRESENTATIVE" OF SOMALI VIEWS. FIGURES OF SOVIET AND CUBAN PRESENCE ARE TYPICAL OF SOMALI OVERSTATEMENT. FURTHERMORE, MFA BELIEVES THAT SIAD BARRE WOULD NOT BE OUSTED IN EVENT OF SOMALI WITHDRAWAL BUT THAT IF HE WERE, REPLACEMENT WOULD BE MORE PRO-ARAB THAN PRO-SOVIET. GARDNER

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